PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
The Power of Biomedical Research

As you read this Report, which includes information through mid-April, you will see that it details Alliances activities prior to the pandemic, as well as those that have occurred as a consequence of COVID-19. What ties the pre-pandemic and current activities together is the message about the importance of biomedical research to our lives.

First and foremost, the NAEVR and AEVR Boards hope that all of you are well and staying safe as we adjust to these challenging times. The COVID-19 pandemic emphasizes the importance of biomedical research, from fundamental molecular genetics to public health and the impact of public policy on global health.

As you can see to the right, the Alliances’ Boards have continued to be active, with each the NAEVR and AEVR Board recently electing Michael Robinson, MD (Allergan, Inc.) as a Director. During the Boards’ mid-May call replacing the on-site meeting it would have had at ARVO, each Board will elect Directors to fill the seats of term-limited Directors. The Alliances’ Boards are committed to involvement with the broad specialty interests of the vision research community as a whole and the power of diversity in improving our work and effectiveness. We look forward to sharing the results of that election with you.

The NAEVR and AEVR Alliances have continued to be active in their respective advocacy and educational roles. As you can see in the box right, the Alliances are promoting the importance of vision research and to keep our voices heard. The Alliances will continue to work with new partners in many NAEVR and AEVR activities. In early February Research to Prevent Blindness (RPB) celebrated its 60th anniversary, and in late March BVA celebrated its 75th anniversary. We congratulate and express our appreciation to each organization for its unique history and major contributions to supporting vision research.

Finally, the Boards want to thank all members who have committed financially to supporting the Alliances in 2020. Although we are not yet sure as to what shape and form our advocacy and educational activities will take for the remainder of this unprecedented year, you can be certain that the Alliances will continue to work with new formats and approaches to promote the vital importance of vision research and to keep our shared community informed.

On March 11, each the Directors of NAEVR and AEVR elected Michael Robinson, MD (Allergan, Inc.) as a Director to serve in the class of 2020-2023. Dr. Robinson, who currently serves as Vice President and Global Therapeutic Area Head for Ophthalmology, had served at the NIH from 1997-2005, initially as a Senior Staff Fellow in Clinical Ophthalmology and then Chief, Consult Services Section of the NEI. He replaces Yehia Hashad, MD, Allegan’s Senior Vice President and Head of Global Clinical Development, who served on each Board from 2015-2020. “The Boards thank Dr. Hashad for his service and wish him the best in his expanded role at Allergan, while we welcome Dr. Robinson and his extensive clinical and research expertise,” said Dr. Lee in a press release.

Michael Robinson, MD Yehia Hashad, MD

“What ties the Alliances’ pre-pandemic and current activities together is the message about the importance of biomedical research to our lives.”

NAEVR/ARVO To Hold May 19 Defense-related Vision Research Opportunities Webinar

With the cancellation of the Annual Meeting, ARVO is partnering with NAEVR to present a May 19 Webinar version of NAEVR’s annual Defense-related Vision Research Opportunities session. Featured speaker Tian Wang, PhD, who serves as the Vision Program Manager within the Department of Defense’s (DOD) Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP), will discuss the FY2020 Vision Research Program (VRP) funding announcement. Visit the ARVO and NAEVR Web sites for full information.